

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

ACTION

May 1, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: GENERAL HAIG
FROM: JOHN D. NEGROPONTE
SUBJECT: Travel of Tran Van Don to Paris

Tab B is an embassy report that Don will be arriving in Paris on May 3 to sound out developments at the peace talks. Don is reported as stating that this is his own initiative but that he has obtained the approval of President Thieu.

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Don is a notorious fence-sitter and we can not be absolutely certain

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[redacted] that he is going with Thieu's full blessing. You must remember that he was close to Big Minh in 1963 and subsequently his minister of defense.

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It may be too late to get a meaningful message to Bunker since Don is probably leaving for Paris imminently (Tab B indicates that he will be arriving on May 3, which suggests he will be leaving Saigon tomorrow morning our time at the latest). You may, however, wish to consider sending the attached backchannel to Ambassador Bunker on an immediate basis for the opening of business Saigon time May 2.

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~~SECRET/EYES ONLY~~

*Met. if John
let's see how
soon first*